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INFORMATION FROM FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

COUNTRY SUBJECT

GDR

Fconomic - Shipbuilding

DATE OF INFORMATION

1953

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HOW

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PUBLISHED Daily newspaper DATE DIST. /O Jun 1954

WHERE

P'JBLISHED Hamburg

NO. OF PAGES 2

DATE **PUBLISHED** LANGUAGE

25 Feb 1954

German

SUPPLEMENT TO

REPORT NO.

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SOURCE

Die Welt

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GDR SHIPYARDS OFERATING AT CAPACITY

[The information in the following report appeared in extract form in Die Welt, which apparently used as its source a 31-page booklet published by the Federal Ministry of All-German Affairs, Der Schiffbau in der sowjetischen Besatzungszone (Shipbuilding in the Soviet Zone of Occupation). This booklet gives a fairly detailed account of shipbuilding in the GDR.]

According to findings by the Federal Ministry of All-German Affairs, the GDR employed about 55,000 workers in its shipyards in mid-1953. This is an increase of about 20,000 over 1950, while before the war there were no more than 6,500 shipyard workers in the present territory of the GDR. Today's employment figures may be in accordance with Soviet plans of making the central and eastern Baltic Sea into a strong naval base, with a sufficient number of alternate ports; however, effective production is certainly not commensurate with the effort expended. One of the reasons for this is probably the considerable shortage of shipbuilding material.

The largest shipyards are the Warnow shipyard in Warnemuende, the Mathias Thesen shippard in Wismar, and the Neptun shippard in Rostock; each employs 8,000 to 10,000 persons. According to the data of the State Planning Commission, most of the production of these shipyards goes to the USSR as reparations. Until 1951, 95 percent of production was for reparations purposes. In 1953, the percentage for reparations dropped to 70; in addition, another 5 percent was exported, also mainly to the USSR. The rest of the ship building production was for domestic use. According to data by the State Planning Commission and other duta available to the Ministry of All-German Affairs, ships and auxiliary vessels valued at 84 million Dentsche marks DM (East) were delivered to the Soviets in 1953. This figure seems low in comparison with the high employment figures.

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A considerable portion of the work done by the shipyards is repair of salvaged former German merchantmen, including the "Cordilleren," "Hamburg," "Albert Ballin," "Oceana," and "Theria." The second item in the shipyard projects is new vessels for the naval units of the People's Police and the Border Police. These units, in addition to Soviet vessels and vessels of the former German Navy, are also using new types of vessels. At present the units possess 8 minesweepers, 3 reconnaissance vessels, 17 high-speed patrol boats, 28 coast guard vessels (including a large number of wartime fishing cutters), and an old-type antiaircraft cruiser. The vessels ordered in 1953 are also mainly destined for the People's Police. They include 2 destroyers developed from the Narvik class, 6 torpedo boats, 5 inesweepers, 38 high-speed patrol boats, [6 coast-guard vessels*], and 27 [armed*] coast-guard vessels with displacements of up to 400 tons.

The fishing fleet is to be brought up to 1,590 vessels with 212,000 tons by next year. Up to now there are about 300 fishing vessels registered in the GDR. It is assumed that most of the new fishing vessels to be built will be of the ocean-going type. The lack of marine internal-combustion engines will necessitate the use of steam engines for a large number of ships.

*[This information was taken from <u>Der Schiffbau in der sowjetischen Besatzungszone.]</u>

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